

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 07831 010857Z
ACTION EA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7581
INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OVIP (ASUKATA, ICHIO)
SUBJECT: REPORT THAT JSP CHAIRMAN ASUKATA WILL VISIT U.S.
PREMATUREO

SUMMARY: YOMIURI STORY THAT JAPAN SOCIALIST PARTY CHAIR-
MAN ASUKATA IS PLANNING TO VISIT WASHINGTON IN SEPTEMBER
TERMED PREMATURE BY YOMIURI AND JSP SOURCES, BOTH OF WHOM
AFFIRM HIS DESIRE TO MAKE TRIP AT APPROPRIATE TIME. END
SUMMARY.

1. IN APRIL 29 FRONT-PAGE EXCLUSIVE, YOMIURI SHIMBUN
REPORTED THAT NEW CHAIRMAN OF JSP, ICHIO ASUKATA, WAS
PLANNING TO VISIT WASHINGTON IN SEPTEMBER OF THIS YEAR,
FOLLOWING VISITS TO NORTH KOREA (MID-MAY) AND USSR (JULY).
THIS WOULD BE FIRST AMERICAN VISIT BY A JSP CHAIRMAN.
STORY QUOTED UNNAMED PARTY SOURCES AS SAYING ASUKATA WOULD
PARTICULARLY LIKE TO DISCUSS WITH USG OFFICIALS U.S.-JAPAN
DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP AND PEACE ON KOREAN PENINSULA.
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YOMIURI REPORTED JSP SOURCES AS SAYING THAT UNDER LEADER-
SHIP OF ASUKATA, JSP WAS LOOKING TO RESTRUCTURING ITS
DEFENSE POLICIES THROUGH DISCUSSIONS WITH U.S. LEADERS,
HOPEFULLY WITH VICE PRESIDENT, SECDEF AND SECSTATE.

2. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH ASUKATA TOLD AMBASSADOR DURING
JANUARY MEETING HE HOPED TO VISIT U.S. SOMETIME THIS YEAR,

EMBASSY HAD NOT BEEN APPRISED OF ANY DECISION ON TRIP.
YOMIURI'S CHIEF OPPOSITION PARTY REPORTER INFORMED EMBOFF
MAY 1 THAT ORIGIN OF STORY, FILED BY JUNIOR REPORTER WHO
DID NOT CHECK WITH HIM BEFOREHAND, WAS SOMEWHAT DUBIOUS,
AND THAT IT WAS FRONT-PAGED BY EDITORS, WHO, ON HOLIDAY
PRIOR TO PRIMIN FUKUDA'S DEPARTURE FOR U.S., HAD LITTLE
ELSE TO RUN. REPORTER SAID IT WAS WELL-KNOWN ASUKATA
WANTED TO VISIT U.S., HOWEVER, AND JSP CENTRAL EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE WAS CURRENTLY DISCUSSING SEPTEMBER POSSIBILITY.
IT SEEMED ALMOST CERTAIN TRIP WOULD BE APPROVED, BUT,
INASMUCH AS PARTY HAD EVIDENTLY NOT YET TAKEN SOUNDINGS
EITHER IN WASHINGTON OR AT EMBASSY, HE SPECULATED THAT JSP
WOULD BE LOATHE TO SEE PREMATURE REPORT ON FRONT-PAGES.
JSP INTERNATIONAL BUREAU STAFFER TOLD EMBOFF HE COULD NOT
EXPLAIN STORY, WHICH HE LAMENTED AS ILL-TIMED, BUT HE ALSO
AFFIRMED CHAIRMAN'S DESIRE TO VISIT U.S. IN NEAR FUTURE.
SHERMAN

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